
FY 2020
SMALL NEPA PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests

Please **do not leave any field BLANK**.

Submit form electronically (as Word doc) to james.chynoweth@usda.gov by **August 7, 2020**.

Project Name	Pinnacle – Bentz Boundary Fence Re-Route
District Name (or “Forestwide”)	Salmon River Ranger District
County where project located?	Idaho County
FS Personnel Name, Phone Number and Email <i>If a partnership, please add name, phone and email; however, an FS employee MUST BE the project proponent and point of contact.</i>	Alyssa Badertscher; alyssa.badertscher@usda.gov (208) 839-2120 Crystal Planer; crystal.dannarplaner@usda.gov (208) 839-2128
Legal Location	T 28N R 3E Sections 5,6,7,8
Decision Maker’s Name	Jeffrey Shinn, SRRD District Ranger
Is the project associated with meeting a Forest target?	No
Which CE Category does this project fit? <i>Provide citation: 36 CFR 220.6(e)(x)</i>	36 CFR 220.6(e)(9) Implementation or modification of minor management practices to improve allotment condition or animal distribution when an allotment management plan is not yet in place. Examples include but are not limited to: (i) Rebuilding a fence to improve animal distribution; (ii) Adding a stock watering facility to an existing water line; and (iii) Spot seeding native species of grass or applying lime to maintain forage condition.
** A Project Record and written Decision are not required for projects using a 36 CFR 220.6 (d) category, except at the Decision Maker’s discretion. <i>IF being submitted under 36 CFR 220.6 (d) category, does the Decision Maker want a written Decision?</i> Yes No	

At what level does the Decision Maker want the project scoped?

Internal X External*

Internal scoping will be through the Small NEPA IDT, unless otherwise specified. Scoping would be documented in the Extraordinary Circumstances Checklist.

External scoping will be with the public via a scoping letter, a legal notice, and the scoping letter posted on the NPCWNF website. The Project will only be scoped to the Tribe(s) et al (see block below) unless otherwise specified.

Provide names and mailing addresses of the individuals, groups, agencies, etc. to be included for External Scoping.

- DO NOT leave this box blank: **If no additional individuals are to be externally scoped please enter NA.**

NA

Does the Decision Maker want a Legal Notice published in the Lewiston Tribune? Yes No X

The scoping period will be 14 days unless the Decision Maker wants to change it. Days

What Level of Analysis (below) does the Decision Maker want for the Project?

 X **Low level:** Choose this level if the project's level of public scrutiny is expected to be relatively low or unknown. Documentation for low level analysis projects would be a completed Extraordinary Circumstances checklist filled out by the specialists, including the name of the specialist who performed the analysis, the project name, and date it was completed. No other written documentation would be generated.

 Moderate level: Choose this level if the project's level of public scrutiny is expected to be relatively moderate to high. In this case, specialists would complete the Extraordinary Circumstances checklist with the only write up being for resources that are present and the rationale for the effects call. No write up would be given for items in the checklist that are not present.

If the determination is no effect (which most CE's should have zero to very little adverse effects), then document *why* that determination was made in one paragraph or less. If the determination is an adverse effect, then *why* that determination was made would be written in less than three paragraphs.

List the Management Area(s) in which your project is located.

12B: Manage for timber production and other multiple uses on a sustained yield basis.

15B: Manage for timber production and other multiple uses on a sustained yield basis while improving the quality of deer and elk winter range. This management area consists of intermingled acreages of lands similar to those found in management areas 12 and 16. The heterogenous spatial mix of these lands is the primary reason for identifying them as unique management areas.

What are the Management Area(s)' Goals and Standards?

12B Range:

1. Administer allotments to protect the timber resource. Transitory forage will be available for livestock use after regeneration is established.
2. Design structures for protection of regeneration and to facilitate livestock distribution.
3. Delay range forage improvements until regeneration has been established.

* Goals and Standards are described in Chapter 3 of the Nez Perce and Clearwater Forest Plans. Include any **relevant** Forestwide Standards found in Chapter 2 of the Forest Plans as well.

Is the project in a designated Idaho Roadless Area (IRA)? Yes* No

If yes, which one?

Is the project in a congressionally designated area, ex. Wilderness Area, Wild & Scenic River Corridor, Research Natural Area, Historic Trail, etc.? Yes* No

If yes, which one(s)?

Are there Floodplains or Wetlands in the project area? Yes No

Are there Municipal Watersheds in the project area? Yes No

If yes, which one?

Is the project located in an RHCA? Yes No

Describe the Existing Conditions of the project area.

The Pinnacle Bentz Boundary fence divides Bentz Ridge and Pinnacle Ridge Pastures of the White Bird Creek Allotment. The current fence location spans between the 479 Road (Bentz Ridge Rd) and the 1870 Road (Pinnacle Ridge Road) crossing Pinnacle Creek where it is highly susceptible to blow down and not easily accessible for required maintenance.

The allotment follows a five-pasture deferred rotation grazing system that alternates trailing onto the allotment via Bentz Ridge every other year. On years livestock do not trail onto Bentz in the spring they trail off it to private lands in the fall. As a result, in even years livestock move from Bentz to Pinnacle mid-June. In odd years they move from Pinnacle to Bentz in early October as shown below.

Allotment	Permittee	Season of Use	Term Livestock #
White Bird Creek	Ray & Lisa Holes + Kevin Zumwalt	May 18 – October 18	400 C/c

Even Years:

Pasture	Cow/calf pairs	Planned Rotation
Bentz Ridge	200	5/18 to 6/18
Pinnacle Ridge	100	6/19 to 7/5

Odd Years:

Pasture	Cow/calf pairs	Planned Rotation
Pinnacle Ridge	200	9/22 to 10/8
Bentz Ridge	200	10/9 to 11/20

Describe the Desired Conditions of the project area.

The Pinnacle Bentz Boundary fence is easily accessible for maintenance and experiences far less blow down making it more effective. Forage utilization within Bentz pasture is more evenly distributed between Bentz and Pinnacle pastures.

What is the Purpose and Need for the proposed action?

The purpose of this project is to improve the accessibility and functionality of the Pinnacle Bentz Boundary fence while also improving forage utilization and livestock distribution within Bentz pasture.

Presently, the fence crosses from Bentz Ridge to Pinnacle Ridge through a densely wooded portion of Pinnacle Creek which is poorly accessible and requires a high level of maintenance from blow down. The proposed reroute will also incorporate the Pinnacle Cove area into the Bentz pasture. Pinnacle Cove provides a good source of both forage and water. By bringing this area into Bentz pasture livestock can be more evenly distributed between Bentz and Pinnacle pastures, lessening the dependency on Bentz Ridge and capitalizing on underutilized Pinnacle Ridge annual grasslands. In addition, the fence would parallel existing ATV trails to make moving livestock in between pastures more efficient.

A cattle guard would be installed where the proposed fence crosses the 1870 road to help prevent cattle drifting between pastures from gates being left open. Currently where the gate crosses the 1870 road requires ATV or a mile walk to check causing permittees to spend a fair amount of time checking and closing this gate when visitors travel through. The proposed fence reroute places the cattleguard at the end of the non-4x4 section portion of the road where it is more accessible by vehicle to inspect.

Describe the Proposed Action.

What is provided will be used in the Scoping Letter (*external only*), by the resource specialists for their effects analyses, and in the Decision document.

Personnel Implementing project: USFS would provide fencing and cattle guard materials, and the permittees would provide the labor and other equipment needed for construction/installation. The permittees would also provide the equipment and labor to install a cattle guard, if authorized to undertake such action by the Engineering Staff and District Ranger.

Project Implementation Location(s): The fence would follow an existing cattle trail to an ATV trail 479G1 then tie across the bottom of Swartz Meadow up towards the 1870 road where it would turn and continue to the first switchback of the 9341.

Project area access: The project area has three access points: the 479G1 ATV trail, the 1870 Road, and the 9341 Road. These routes would provide access at multiple points that are distributed across the proposed fence route.

Specific actions / activities implemented: About 1.5 miles of 3-wire fence with steel and wood post spacing no more than 24' apart with three wood stays would be constructed, and a cattle guard or gate would be installed on the 1870 Road before the road becomes a native surface road.

Equipment Used: When possible, ATVs may be used on existing trails to move materials through project area. Fence construction would be completed by hand, rock jacks and tree braces may be necessary in areas with rocky terrain.

Permits Needed: A road use permits issued by the District Ranger would be needed to authorize permittee's equipment to install the cattleguard. In addition, permittees would need engineering specifications for cattle guard installation if authorized.

Potential Access Restrictions: None anticipated. Gate/cattle guard would continue to allow motorized access through the 1870 Road.

Post-implementation Monitoring: As a part of annual Rangeland Monitoring,

- improvement condition(s) and overall function are inspected and documented.
- Identify and report invasive species infestations, on or adjacent to the activity sites, to the District Weed Coordinator.

Implementation Timeline: If approved, fence construction could begin as early as Spring 2021.

Please use the word 'would' in your descriptions, not 'will'. This is a proposal that might be implemented, not will be implemented. Thanks.

List the Design Feature / Mitigation Measures * to be included with the Proposed Action.

Noxious Weeds

Remove all mud, soil, and plant parts from “Off-road equipment” (includes all logging and construction machinery, except for log trucks, chip vans, service vehicles, water trucks, pickup trucks, cars, and similar vehicles) prior to initial mobilization and any subsequent mobilizations, to limit the spread of noxious weeds. If Purchaser desires to clean Off-Road Equipment on National Forest land, they shall obtain prior approval from Contracting Officer as to the location for such cleaning and measures, if any, for controlling impacts.

Small NEPA IDT/resource specialists are listed below. Contact them if you have any questions regarding their resource for your project.

Botany – Mike Hays, mike.hays@usda.gov; 983-4028

Fisheries – Derrick Bawdon, derrick.bawdon@usda.gov; 963-4211

Heritage – Christy Mog, christy.mog@usda.gov; 935-4269

Hydrology – TBD

Minerals – Marty Jones, martin.jones@usda.gov; 983-5158

Recreation – Carol Hennessey, carol.hennessey@usda.gov; 935-4270

Soils – Alex Rozin, alexandra.rozin@usda.gov, 842-2100

Wild and Scenic River – Chris Noyes, chris.noyes@usda.gov; 935-4251

Wildlife – Jim Lutes, james.r.lutes@usda.gov; 963-4202

Small NEPA Planner – Jeff Chynoweth, james.chynoweth@usda.gov; 935-4260

PROJECT MAPS

Please send – per the instructions outlined below – a GIS-generated map or maps of the project area (pdf format only) with the project submission.

- **Make sure that the map layers can be turned on / off / are editable.**
- **Make sure the map(s) can fit on an 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper.**

1. Provide at least one map, **preferably “portrait” orientation**, with the project area / features as:
 - a Point, e.g. culvert, bridge, etc.,
 - a Line, e.g. fence, road, creek, etc., and/or
 - a Polygon, e.g. stand boundaries, treatment areas, etc.
 - Do not use a point if treating an area, use a polygon.
 - Points/lines/polygons need to be distinct and easily found on the map.
 - The project area / site needs to be centered on the map, especially if only one area/feature.
2. Please **use the Forest Visitor Map as your map’s base layer**.
 - Do not add contour lines to the FV map unless needed for clarifying the proposed action. Contour lines can make the map difficult to read.
 - If contour lines are needed, make sure they are distinguishable from other linear features such as roads, trails, streams, etc.
 - A topo map can be substituted for the FV map. If using a topo map but the contour lines are not important the topo lines should be light gray or opaque.
 - Regardless of base map, make sure there are identifiable elements, e.g. towns, roads, streams, etc. on the map to help locate the project area on the landscape and that the elements are clearly labeled.
3. The **preferred map scale is whatever scale best presents the project area’s location and proposed activities**:
 - If the 1:24K scale is too small (i.e. the project feature(s) – point/line/polygon – would be hard to find or would be indistinguishable on just one map), use a larger scale to show the overall project area (coarse scale map) and smaller scaled maps to show the project features (fine scale map).
 - If the 1:24K scale is too big (i.e. the project feature is a tiny point or thin line lost/hard to find on the larger landscape), use a smaller scale to highlight the feature while ensuring there are elements on the map to identify the project’s location.
 - If you need to make additional maps, please make as few as possible.
4. At a minimum, **all maps should include**:
 - Title (project name and district name only (please));
 - Legend (features clearly labeled)
 - Scale (ending in half miles, e.g. 0__0.25__0.5 miles, or in full miles, e.g. 0__0.25__0.5__1.0 miles)
 - North Arrow
 - Display the above in boxes with a black outline and a white background (not gray or yellow)
 - Do not ‘Halo’ the text or numbers or anything else on the map. Please.
 - The Scale needs to be large enough to read the numbers.
5. Finally, please **include the mapmakers name and the date it was created on the map**.

The Map(s) you provide will be used for Scoping the Public and the Tribes and in the Decision document. Please make sure they show – clearly, effectively, and professionally – what activity or activities are being proposed and where they are located on the Nez Perce - Clearwater National Forests.

SHAPEFILES

The resource specialists require the shapefile(s) of the project's proposed activities before they will conduct their analyses. Providing the shapefile does not substitute for providing a pdf map.

The Project Proponent needs to send the shapefile, or a location where the shapefile can be found, to the Small NEPA Planner (currently: jjchynoweth@usda.gov) by the time or shortly after the District Ranger submits this form.

- Shapefiles need to include the Project Name and have the Feature (culvert, bridge, etc.) labeled.
- Shapefiles need to include the following extensions – .dbf, .prj, .sbn, .shp, .shx, and .xml.

Projects in Roadless Area

What is the Inventoried Roadless Area name?	<u>Forest Plan IRA Name (if different):</u>
Identify the Idaho Roadless Management Classification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Wild Land Recreation</i> • <i>Special Areas of Historic or Tribal Significance</i> • <i>Primitive</i> • <i>Backcountry Restoration</i> • <i>General Forest, Rangeland and Grassland</i> 	Classification(s):
Does the project involve constructing or reconstructing roads? Yes* No <i>* If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2 then navigate to Subpart C 294.23</i>	
Does the project involve cutting trees? Yes* No <i>* If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2 then navigate to Subpart C 294.24</i>	
Does the project involve removing minerals, including common variety minerals? Yes* No <i>* If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2 then navigate to Subpart C 294.25</i>	

JC : 6/26/2020

Additional Information: